

THE MURPHY (Author)
W A Y
TO 1607/5-101
KEEP HIM,
A
C O M E D Y
I N
T H R E E A C T S :

As it is performed at the

THEATRE ROYAL in *Drury Lane.*

Connubio jungam stabili; propriamque dicabo. VIRG.

The THIRD EDITION.

L O N D O N :

Printed for P. VAILLANT, opposite *Southamp-*
ton-street in the *Strand.* MDCCLX.

0

THE

1607/51011

Y

TO

MINISTER

COMEDY

STREET



ADVERTISEMENT.

A Poem * of Dr. SWIFT's, (with all due Deference to the Ladies, that Poem is mentioned) gave the Author the first Idea of a Comedy on this Subject. He had not thought sufficiently of it, to form any regular Plan, when *La Nouvelle École de Femmes*, of Monsieur *De Moissy*, fell into his Hands. There were Circumstances and Sentiments in that Piece, which coincided with his Design; and he also had some Objections. The Husband's visiting a Lady of Fashion, under his own Name, and passing upon her for an unmarried Man; the *Chevalier's* Attempt upon his Friend's Honour, without a proper Detection of either of them; the Wife singing and dancing about the Stage thro' the whole Last Act, in order to reclaim her Husband, and his Approbation of it; without any other *Denouement*, and without any Situations of Embarassment, which the Story so naturally tended to, were, in his Opinion, palpable Deficiencies. To substitute other Materials, to form a Last Act entirely new, and to work the whole into an *English* Comedy, was the Employment of some vacant Hours in the last Summer. Whether he has been able to do it with any tolerable Spirit, either in the Dialogue, Characters, or Fable, he now submits to the Decision of the candid Reader. He acknowledges the publick Candour, and he returns his Thanks to Mr. *Garrick*, for his admirable Acting; and to all the Performers concerned in the following Scenes; and also in THE DESERT ISLAND.

Lincoln's-Inn,
1st Feb. 1760.

ARTHUR MURPHY.

* STREPHON and CHLOE.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

<i>Lovemore,</i>	Mr. GARRICK.
<i>Sir Brilliant Fashion,</i>	Mr. PALMER.
<i>William, Servant to Lovemore,</i>	Mr. KING.

W O M E N.

<i>Mrs. Lovemore,</i>	Mrs. YATES.	
<i>The Widow Bellmour,</i>	Miss MACKLIN.	
<i>Muslin, Waiting-woman to</i>	}	Mrs. CLIVE.
<i>Mrs. Lovemore,</i>		
<i>Mignonet, Maid to Mrs.</i>	}	Mrs. BRADSHAW.
<i>Bellmour,</i>		
<i>Pompey, a black Boy belonging to the Widow.</i>		

Scene L O N D O N.

The Way to Keep Him.

ACT I. SCENE I.

*The Hall in Lovemore's House, William at Cards
with a Brother Servant.*

Will. **A** PLAGUE on it!—I've turn'd out
my Game.—Is Forty-seven good?—
Serv. Equal.——

Will. A Plague go with it.—Tearse to a Queen!—
Serv. Equal.

Will. I've ruin'd my Game, and be hang'd to me.—
I don't believe there's a Footman in *England* plays
with worse Luck than myself.—Four Aces is Four-
teen!

Serv. That's hard;—Cruel, by *Jupiter*!

Will. Four Aces is Fourteen—Fifteen (*plays.*)

Serv. There's your Equality.—

Will. Very well—Sixteen (*plays*)—Seventeen
(*plays.*)

Enter Muslin.

Muslin. There's a couple of you, indeed!—You're
so fond of the Vices of your Betters, that you're
scarce out of your Beds, when you must pretend to
imitate them and their Ways, forsooth.——

Will. Prithee, be quiet, Woman, do.—Eighteen
(*plays.*)

Muslin. Set you up indeed, Mr. Coxcomb.——

Will. Nineteen! Clubs (*plays.*)

Muslin. Have done with your Foolery, will ye?—
And send my Mistrefs word——

A

Will.

Will. Hold your Tongue, Mrs. *Muslin*, you'll put us out.—What shall I play?—I'll tell you, Woman, my Master and I desire to have nothing to say to you or your Mistress.—Twenty ; Diamonds ! (*plays.*)

Muslin. But I tell you, Mr. Sauce-box, that my Lady desires to know when your Master came home last Night, and how he is this Morning?

Will. Prithee, be quiet.—I and my Master are resolved to be teiz'd no more by you.—And so, Mrs. Go-Between, you may return as you came.—What the Devil shall I play?—We'll have nothing to do with you, I tell you.—

Muslin. You'll have nothing to do with us!—But you shall have to do with us, or I'll know the Reason why.—(*Snatches the Cards out of his Hands.*)

Will. Death and Fury!—This meddling Woman has destroyed my whole Game.—

Muslin. Now, Sir, will you be so obliging as to send my Mistress an Answer to her Questions, how and when your rake-helly Master came home last Night?—

Will. I'll tell you what, Mrs. *Muslin*,—you and my Master, will be the death of me at last ; that's what you will.—In the Name of Charity, what do you both take me for?—Whatever Appearances may be, I am but of mortal Mould.—Nothing supernatural about me.—

Muslin. Upon my Word, Mr. Powder-Puff!—

Will. I have not indeed!—And so, do you see, Flesh and Blood can't hold it always.—I can't be for ever a Slave to your Whims, and your second-hand Airs.—

Muslin. Second-hand Airs! —

Will. Yes, second-hand Airs! You take 'em at your Ladies Toilets with their cast Gowns, and so you descend to us with them.—And then, on the other hand, there's my Master!—Because he chuses to live upon the Principal of his Health, and so run out his whole Stock as fast as he can, he must have the Pleasure



sure of my Company with him in his Devil's Dance to the other World.——Never at home, till Three, Four, Five, Six in the Morning!——

Muslin. Ay, a vile, ungrateful Man, to have so little Regard for a Wife that doats upon him.——And your Love for me is all of a Piece.——I've no Patience with you both.——A couple of false, perfidious, abandoned, profligate.——

Will. Hey, hey,——Where's your Tongue running?——My Master is, as the World goes, a good Sort of a civil Kind of a Husband, and I,——Heav'n help me,——a poor Simpleton of an amorous, constant Puppy, that bears with all the Follies of his little Tyrant here.——Come and kiss me, you Jade, come and kiss me.——

Muslin. Paws off, *Cesar*.——Don't think to make me your Dupe.——I know, when you go with him to this new Lady, this *Bath* Acquaintance; and I know you're as false as my Master, and give all my Dues to your Mrs. *Mignonet* there.——

Will. Hush, Not a Word of that.——I'm ruined, pressed, and sent on board a Tender directly, if you blab that I trusted you with that Secret.——But to charge me with Falsehood,——Injustice and Ingratitude! My Master, to be sure, does drink an agreeable Dish of Tea with the Widow——Has been there every Night this Month past.——How long it will last, Heav'n knows!——But thither he goes, and I attend him.——I ask my Master, Sir, says I, what Time would you please to want me?——He gives me his Answer, and then I strut by Mrs. *Mignonet*, without so much as tipping her one Glance; she stands watering at the Mouth, and a pretty Fellow that, says she.——Ay, ay, gaze on, says I, gaze on;——I see what you would be at:——You'd be glad to have me,——You'd be glad to have me!——But four Grapes, my Dear! I'll go home and cherish my own lovely Wanton;——and so I do, you know I do.——Then after toying with thee, I hasten back to my Master; later indeed than he desires, but always too soon for him.——He's

both to part ; he lingers and dangles, and I stand cooling my Heels.—O ! to the Devil I pitch such a Life.—

Muslin. Why don't you strive to reclaim the vile Man then ?

Will. Softly, not so fast ;—I have my Talent to be sure ! yes, yes, I have my Talent ; some Influence over my Master's Mind : But can you suppose, that I have Power to turn the Drift of his Inclinations, and lead him as I please—and to whom ? to his Wife ! Pshaw !——Ridiculous,—foolish, and absurd !

Muslin. Mighty well, Sir ! Can you proceed ?

Will. I tell you a Wife is out of Date, now-a-days ;—Time was—but that's all over—a Wife's a Drug now ; mere Tar-water, with every Virtue under Heaven, but nobody takes it.—

Muslin. Well, I swear, I could slap your impudent Face.—

Will. Come and kiss me, I say.—

Muslin. A Fiddlestick for your Kisses,—while you encourage your Master to open Rebellion against the best of Wives.—

Will. I tell you 'tis her own Fault ; why don't she strive to please him, as you do me ? Come, throw your Arms about my Neck.—

Muslin. Ay, as I used to do, Mr. Brazen !

Will. Then must I force you to your own Good—*(kisses her)*—Pregnant with Delight ! Egad if my Master was not in the next Room—

Muslin. Hush ! My Mistress's Bell rings,—how long has he been up ?

Will. He has been up—He has been up—'Sdeath you've set me all on Fire.—

Muslin. There, there,—the Bell rings again—Let me be gone—*(going.)* Well, but what must I say ? When did he come home ?

Will. At Five this Morning, rubbed his Forehead, damn'd himself for a Blockhead, went to Bed in a peevish

peevish Humour, and is now in tip-top Spirits with Sir *Brilliant Fashion*, in the next Room.

Muslin. Oh Lud ! That Bell rings again—There, there, let me be gone. *(She kisses him and Exit.)*

Will. There goes high and low Life contrasted in one Person ;——'Tis well I have not told her the whole of my Master's Secrets : She'll blab that he visits this Widow from *Bath*.——But if they enquire, they'll be told he does not ; the Plot lies deeper than they think, and so they'll only get into a Puzzle.—So, my Master's Bell rings too.—*(Exit.)*

SCENE another Apartment ; Mrs. Lovemore, and a Maid attending her.

Mrs. Love. —— This Trash of Tea !—I don't know why I drink so much of it.—Heigh ho !—I wonder what keeps *Muslin*—do you step, Child, with my Compliments to your Master, and let him know, I shall be glad of his Company to a Dish of Tea this Morning. —

Maid. Yes, Ma'am.—— *(Exit.)*

Mrs. Love. Surely, never was any poor Woman treated with such cruel Indifference ; nay, with such an open undisguised Insolence of Gallantry.

Enter Muslin.

Mrs. Love. Well, *Muslin*, have you seen his Prime Minister ?——

Muslin. Yes, Ma'am, I have seen Mr. *William*, and he says, as how my Master came home, according to Custom, at Five this Morning, and in a huge Pickle.—He's now at Breakfast, and has Sir *Brilliant Fashion* with him.

Mrs. Love. Is he there again ?

Muslin. He is Ma'am ; and as I passed by Master's Study, I overheard them both laughing as loud as any thing, —

Mrs. Love. About some precious Mischief, I'll be sworn ; and all at my Cost too !—Heigh ho !

Muslin. Dear Ma'am, why will you chagrin yourself about a vile Man, that is not worth,—no, as I live and breathe,—not worth a single Sigh? —

Mrs. Love. What can I do, *Muslin*?

Muslin. Do, Ma'am! Lard! — If I was as you, I'd do for him; — As I'm a living Christian, I would. — If I could not cure my Grief, I'd find some Comforts, that's what I would.

Mrs. Love. Heigh ho! — I have no Comfort. —

Muslin. No Comfort, Ma'am? — Whose Fault then? — Would any body but you, Ma'am? — It provokes me to think of it, — Would any body, Ma'am, young and handsome as you are, with so many Accomplishments, Ma'am, sit at home here, as melancholy as a poor Servant out of Place? — And all this for what? — Why for a Husband, and such a Husband! — What do you think the World will say of you, Ma'am, if you go on this way?

Mrs. Love. I care not what they say, — I am tired of the World, and the World may be tired of me, if it will: — My Troubles are my own only, and I must endeavour to bear them. — Who knows what Patience may do? — If Mr. *Lovemore* has any Feeling left, my Resignation may, some Day or other, have its Effect, and incline him to do me Justice.

Muslin. But, dear Ma'am, that's waiting for dead Mens Shoes, — Incline him to do you Justice! — What signifies expecting and expecting. — Give me a Bird in the Hand. — Lard, Ma'am, to be for ever pining and grieving! — Dear Heart! — If all the Women in London, in your Case, were to sit down and die of the Spleen, what would become of all the public Places? — They might turn *Vaux-Hall* to a Hop-Garden, make a Brew-house of *Ranelagh*, and let both the Play-houses to a Methodist Preacher. We should not have the Racketting with 'em we have now. — “*John*, let the Horses be put to. — *John*, go to my Lady *Trumpabout*'s, and invite her to a small Party of twenty or thirty Card-tables. — *John*,
“ run

“run to my Lady *Cat-Gut*, and let her Ladyship know I’ll wait on her to the new Opera.—*John*,
“run as fast as ever you can, with my Compliments
“to Mr. *Varney*, and tell him I shall take it as the
“greatest Favour on Earth, if he will let me have a
“Side-Box for the new Play.—No Excuse tell him.”

—They whisk about the Town, and rantipole it with as unconcerned Looks, and as florid Outfides, as if they were treated at home like so many Goddesses, tho’ every body knows Possession has *ungoddesst* them all long ago, and their Husbands care no more for them,—no by Jingo, no more than they do for their Husbands.——

Mrs. Love. You run on at a strange Rate.——

Muslin. (*In a Passion.*) Dear Ma’am, ’tis enough to make a body run on.—If every body thought like you.——

Mrs. Love. If every body loved like me.——

Muslin. A Brass Thimble for Love, if it is not answer’d by Love.—What the Deuce is here to do?
—Shall I go and fix my Heart upon a Man, that shall despise me for that very Reason, and, “Ay,” says he, “poor Fool, I see she loves me,——The
“Woman’s well enough, only she has one inconvenient Circumstance about her: I’m married to her,
“and Marriage is the Devil.”——And then, when he’s going a roguing, smiles impudently in your Face, and, “My Dear, divert yourself, I’m just going to
“kill half an Hour at the Chocolate-house, or to
“peep in at the Play; your Servant, my Dear, your
“Servant.”——Fye upon ’em!—I know ’em all.—Give me a Husband that will enlarge the Circle of my innocent Pleasures:——But a Husband, now-a-days Ma’am, is no such a thing.——A Husband now,——as I hope for Mercy, is nothing at all but a Scare-Crow, to shew you the Fruit, but touch it if you dare.——A Husband——the *Devil* take ’em all——Lord forgive one for swearing—is nothing at all but

a Bug-Bear, a Snap-Dragon; a Husband, Ma'am, is——

Mrs. Love. Prithce, Peace with your Tongue, and see what keeps that Girl——

Muslin. Yes, Ma'am,—Why, Jenny,—why don't you come up to my Mistress?—What do you stand a gossiping there for?—A Husband, Ma'am, is a mere Monster;—that is to say, if one makes him so; then, for certain, he is a Monster indeed;—and if one does not make him so, then he behaves like a Monster; and of the two Evils, by my Troth—Ma'am, was you ever at the Play of *Catharine and Mercutio*?—The vile Man calls his Wife his Goods, and his Chattles, and his Household Stuff.—There you may see, Ma'am, what a Husband is——a Husband is——but here comes one will tell you——Here comes Sir *Brilliant Fashion*.—Ask his Advice, Ma'am.

Mrs. Love. His Advice!—Ask Advice of the Man who has estranged Mr. *Lovemore's* Affections from me!

Muslin. Well, I protest and vow, Ma'am, I think Sir *Brilliant* a very pretty Gentleman.—He's the very Pink of the Fashion!—He dresses fashionably, lives fashionably, wins your Money fashionably, loses his own fashionably, and does every thing fashionably; and then, he is so lively, and talks so lively, and so much to say, and so never at a Loss.—But here he comes.

Enter Sir Brilliant, singing.

Sir Brill. Mrs. *Lovemore*, your most obedient very humble Servant.—But, my dear Madam, what always in a vis-a-vis Party with your *Suivante*!—You will afford me your Pardon, my dear Ma'am, if I avow that this does a little wear the Appearance of *Misanthropy*.

Mrs. Love. Far from it, Sir *Brilliant*—We were engaged in your Panegyric.——

Sir Brill. My Panegyric!—Then am I come most apropos to give a helping Hand towards making it com-

complete.—Mr. *Lovemore* will kiss your Hand presently, Ma'am;—He has not as yet entirely adjusted his Dress.—In the mean time, I can, if you please, help you to some Anecdotes, which will perhaps enable you to colour your Canvass a little higher.

Mrs. *Love*. I hope you will be sure, among those Anecdotes, not to omit the egregious Exploit of seducing Mr. *Lovemore* entirely from his Wife.

(*She makes a Sign to Muffin to go.*)

—Sir *Brill*. I, Ma'am!—Let me perish, Madam—

Mrs. *Love*. Oh! Sir, I am no Stranger to——

Sir *Brill*. May Fortune eternally forsake me, and Beauty frown on me, if ever——

Mrs. *Love*. Don't protest too strongly, Sir *Brilliant*——

Sir *Brill*. May I never hold four by Honours——

Mrs. *Love*. Nay, but Sir.——

Sir *Brill*. Ma'am, I am altogether struck with Amazement.—May I never taste the dear Delight of breaking a *Pharaoh* Bank, or bullying the whole Room at a Brag-Party, if ever I was, in Thought, Word, or Deed, accessory to his Infidelity.—I deny all unlawful Confederacy.——

Mrs. *Love*. Oh! Sir, it is in vain to deny.

Sir *Brill*. Nay, but my dear Mrs. *Lovemore*, give me leave.—I alienate the Affections of Mr. *Lovemore*?—Consider, Madam how would this tell in *Westminster-Hall*.——Sir *Brilliant Fashion*, How say you, guilty of this Indictment or not guilty?—Not guilty, poss.—Thus Issue is joined;—you enter the Court, and in sober Sadness charge the whole plump upon me, without a Word as to the how, when, and where;—No Proof positive,—there ends the Prosecution.

Mrs. *Love*. But, Sir, your stating of the Case——

Sir *Brill*. Dear-Ma'am, don't interrupt.——

Mrs. *Love*. Let me explain this Matter.——

Sir *Brill*. Nay, Mrs. *Lovemore*, allow me fair Play.—I am now upon my Defence.—You will please to consider, Gentlemen of the Jury, that Mr. *Lovemore*
more

more is not a Wand, nor I a Guardian; that he is his own Master to do as he pleases; that Mr. *Lovemore* is fond of Gaiety, Pleasure, and Enjoyment; that he knows how to live, and if he does not like the Bill of Fare that is catered for him at home, he very naturally goes abroad to seek for something more palatable.

How say ye?—Gentlemen of the Jury?—Not guilty.——There Ma'am, you see, Not guilty.

Mrs. *Love*. You run on finely, Sir *Brilliant*;——but don't imagine that this bantering Way——

Sir *Brill*. Acquitted by my Country, Ma'am, you see,—fairly acquitted!——

Mrs. *Love*. Be it so then.—But you hinted something about Mr. *Lovemore*'s not liking his Bill of Fare at home,—I should be glad you would explain that Matter, Sir——

Sir *Brill*. Right, Madam, very right:—I did touch upon that Head.—It was but slightly—I did not care, in an open Court, to enlarge further upon that Matter.—But to be plain, upon my Word, Mrs. *Lovemore*, for a fine Woman like you to be the Dupe of your own false Delicacy, an old fashioned kind of Sentiment, a vulgar Prejudice, proscribed by Custom long ago; an antiquated Principle of I know not what:—Renounce it altogether—*vivez* Ma'am,—do like other People of Condition; mix with other amiable Ladies, who know how to use the Senses Nature has given them; pluck the Fruit that grows around ye, and bid Adieu to the Reign of the melancholy Pleasures for ever.

Mrs. *Love*. After the very edifying Counsel you give Mr. *Lovemore*, this loose Stream of yours, Sir *Brilliant*, is not at all surprizing;—and, Sir, your late Project——

Sir *Brill*. My late Project!——

Mrs. *Love*. Yes, Sir: Not content with leading Mr. *Lovemore* into a thousand Dissipations from all conjugal Affection and domestic Happiness, you have lately introduced him to your Mrs. *Bellmour*.——

Sir

Sir Brill. Ma'am, he does not so much as know *Mrs. Bellmour*.

Mrs. Love. Fye upon it, *Sir Brilliant*! — Falsehood is but a poor —

Sir Brill. Falsehood I disdain, Ma'am, — and I *Sir Brilliant Fashion* declare, that *Mr. Lovemore*, your Husband, is not acquainted with the Widow *Bellmour*; — and if he was acquainted? — What then? No ill Consequence could from thence redound to you, — You don't know that Lady, Ma'am, — But I'll let you into her whole History, — her whole History, Ma'am: — Pray be seated. The Widow *Bellmour's* History, is this; She is one of those Ladies —

Lovemore speaks within. — *William!* Is the Chariot at the Door?

Sir Brill. We are interrupted. —

Enter Lovemore.

Love. Very well, — let the Chariot be brought round directly. — How do you do this Morning, my Dear? *Sir Brilliant*, I beg your Pardon. — How do you do my Dear? —

(With an Air of cold Civility.)

Mrs. Love. Only a little indisposed in Mind, and Indisposition of the Mind is of no sort of Consequence; not worth a Cure. —

Love. I beg your Pardon, *Mrs. Lovemore*; Indisposition of the Mind. — *Sir Brilliant*, that is really a mighty pretty Ring you have on your Finger. —

Sir Brill. A Bauble: Will ye look at it?

Mrs. Love. Though I have but few Obligations to *Sir Brilliant*, yet I fancy I may ascribe to him the Favour of this Visit, *Mr. Lovemore*.

Love. *(Looking at the Ring.)* — Nay, now positive. Iy you wrong me; — I was obliged to you for your civil Enquiries concerning me this Morning, and so on my Part, I came to return the Compliment before I go abroad. — Upon my Word 'tis very prettily set. —

(Gives it.)

Mrs. Love. Are you going abroad, *Sir*? —

Love.

Love. A Matter of Business; — I hate Business — but Business must be done. — (*Examining his Ruffles.*) — Pray is there any News? — any News, my Dear? —

Mrs. Love. It would be News to me, Sir, if you would be kind enough to let me know whether I may expect the Favour of your Company to Dinner.

Love. It would be impertinent in me to answer such a Question, because I can give no direct positive Answer to it; — as Things happen, — perhaps I may, — perhaps may not. — But don't let me be of any Inconvenience to you; — it is not material where a body eats. — Can I set you down any where, Sir *Brilliant*?

Sir Brill. I thank you, no — my Chariot's in waiting. — I have some Visits to make, and shall rattle half the Town over presently.

Love. As you will — *à ca*, your Servant, — *Mrs. Lovemore.* — My Dear, (*drawing his Gloves on,*) — I kiss your Hand. — Who waits there — (*going, returns,*) *Apropos*, you have heard what happened, (*to Sir Brilliant.*)

Sir Brill. When, and where?

Love. A Word in your Ear, — Ma'am, with your Permission.

Mrs. Love. That cold, contemptuous Civility, Mr. *Lovemore* —

Love. Pshaw! — Prithee now, — How can you, my Dear? — That's very peevish now, and ill-natured. It is but about a mere Trifle. — Hark ye, (*whispers,*) I lost every Thing I play'd for after you went, — the *Foreigner*, and he, understand one another. — I beg Pardon, Ma'am, it was only about an Affair at the Opera.

Mrs. Love. The Opera, Mr. *Lovemore*, or any thing, is more agreeable than my Company.

Love. You wrong me now, I declare you wrong me; — and if it will give you any Pleasure, I'll sup at home. — Can't we meet at the *St. Alban's* to Night? — (*aside to Sir Brilliant*)

Mrs.

Mrs. Love. I believe I need not tell you what Pleasure that would give me: But unless the Pleasure is mutual, Mr. Lovemore: ———

Love. Ma'am I ——— I ——— I perceive all the Delicacy of that Sentiment; ——— But ——— a ——— I shall incommode you, ——— you possibly may have some private Party ——— and it would be very impolite in me, to obstruct your Schemes of Pleasure. ——— Would it not, Sir Brilliant? (Laughs.)

Sir Brill. It would be gothic to the last Degree. — Ha! ha!

Love. Ha! ha! ——— To be sure, for me to be of the Party, would look as if we lived together like our Friend Sir Jealous Hotbrain and his scolding Wife, who are for ever like two Game-Cocks, ready armed to goad and wound one another most heartily. — Ha! ha!

Sir Brill. The very Thing. — Ha! ha!

Love. So it is, ——— so it is. (Both stand laughing.)

Mrs. Love. Very well, Gentlemen; you have it all to yourselves.

Love. Odsso! (looking at his Watch,) I shall be beyond my Time. ——— Any Commands into the City, Madam? ———

Mrs. Love. Commands! ——— I have no Commands, Sir.

Love. I have an appointment there at my Banker's; — Sir Brilliant, you know old Discount? ———

Sir Brill. What, he that was in Parliament?

Love. The same; — Entire Butt, I think, was the Name of the Borough. ——— Ha! ha! ha! ——— Ma'am, your most obedient; — Sir Brilliant, yours. — Who waits there; — no Ceremony. — Your Servant.

[Exit Singing.]

Sir Brill. Bon Voyage! ———

Enter Muslin.

Muslin. Did you call, Ma'am?

Mrs. Love. Come hither, Muslin; ———

B

(Whispers

(*Whispers her*) mind what I say. —

Muslin. I'll do it, Madam, I'll do it. [Exit.

Mrs. Love. He's gone to visit this *Mrs. Bellmour*, I suppose. —

Sir Brill. Dear Ma'am, how can you take such a Notion in your Head? — But apropos — that brings us back to the little History I was just going to give you of the Widow *Bellmour*. —

Mrs. Love. Proceed, Sir.

Sir Brill. The Widow *Bellmour*, Ma'am, is a Lady, who to all the Charms of external Beauty, has added such an Elegance of Understanding, and such a Vivacity of Wit, that it is no Wonder all the pretty Fellows are on their Knees to her. — Her Person youthful, blooming, and graceful; — and then her Manner! — And so entertaining! — Such Quickness in her Transition from one thing to another; and every thing she does, does so become her! — Does she sit still? 'tis an indolent *Venus* before ye, — Does she move, 'tis Beauty walking in conscious Triumph! To see her smile, and hear her talk, — I shall glow up into Rapture, and fall a raving if I talk a Moment longer about her. —

Mrs. Love. Pray, finish your Picture, Sir. —

Sir Brill. 'Tis from the real Life, I assure ye. — In short, Ma'am, she is a Lady that has been abroad, has ever kept the best Company, and has such a Variety of Talents, that upon my Soul, she knows the whole Theory of agreeable Sensations better than all the Philosophers in *Europe*. —

Mrs. Love. And to this Theory, she has joined the Practice, I presume. —

Sir Brill. She has. —

Mrs. Love. I imagined as much. —

Sir Brill. Ma'am! —

Mrs. Love. You need not affect to be surprized, Sir, — there is no mighty Secret in the Affair. — My Accounts of the Lady inform me, that she is as you say, young and handsome; has lived a great deal abroad, buried her Husband there, is lately come to Town, has

has taken a House, — lives at great Expence, receives all the Men of Rank and Fortune. — We all know what the World is apt to infer from these Appearances. —

Sir *Brill*. I am no Stranger to the Way of the World. — Every Object has its different Aspects, its Side-lights; and the World is generally good-natured enough to fix upon the most unfavourable Points of View.

Mrs. *Love*. So then, this is another antiquated Prejudice of mine.

Sir *Brill*. Nothing more certain. —

Mrs. *Love*. Oh! mighty well, Sir! — She is a very Vestal; — come, exhibit your Portrait. — A Vestal from your School of Painting will, no doubt, be very curious. —

Sir *Brill*. My dear Madam, consider what you are saying! — What is your Charge against this Lady? That she is amiable! — Surely Mrs. *Love*more should be the last Person in the World, to reproach her with a Quality, which so eminently possesses herself.

Mrs. *Love*. The Gallantry of that Compliment, Sir *Brilliant*, added to your other Favours —

Sir *Brill*. What next? — That she has agreeable Talents! What then? As Nature is liberal of Talents to but very few, she makes a kind of Recompence to those who have none, by conducting to their Entertainment. — But she is young and handsome! — So perishable a Quality might, methinks, be suffered to bloom without Reproach. — Ay, but she has taken a House, and sees Company. — It is what she is intitled to, and a fine Picture should be seen by People of Rank and Taste; — and surely, Madam, your Sex entrenches upon your own Happiness, by not allowing that a Woman may partake of the innocent Pleasures of Life, unless she has resigned her Person to a Man, and parted with her Liberty! —

Mrs. *Love*. And so you would persuade me that Mr. *Love*more is not acquainted with her? —

Sir *Brill*. Absolutely ignorant of him! — and I'll tell you further, she has such a Generosity of Temper,

per, and such a feeling Heart, that, were she to know him, and to know that his Visits gave you Pain, she would never be at home for him again.—

Mrs. Love. Then give me leave, Sir—If you have so exalted an Opinion of the Lady, how comes it that you desist from paying your Addresses in that Quarter ?

Sir Brill. Compulsion, Ma'am,—it is not voluntary.—The Garrison, I thought, was upon the Point of surrendering, but up came my Lord *Etheridge* with his honourable Forces to relieve the Town.—I thought he was out of the Kingdom, but it seems he is returned.—I bribed the Chamber-maid Yesterday, and I find he has supplanted me ; and so all that remains for me, is to do Justice to the Lady, and console myself in the best way I can for my Demerits, and the Insufficiency of my Pretensions —

Mrs. Love. And am I really to believe all this ?—

Sir Brill. May the first Woman I put the Question to, strike me to the Centre with a supercilious Eyebrow, if every Syllable is not minutely true,—so that you see, Ma'am, I am not the Cause of your Inquietude.—There is not on Earth a Man that could be more averse from such a thing,—nor a Person in the World, who more earnestly aspires to prove the tender Esteem he bears ye,—and, Ma'am,—I have long panted for an Opportunity.—By all that's soft she hears me (*aside*).—I have long panted, Ma'am, for a tender Moment like this,—with all the Ardor of Love, which Charms like yours alone could kindle.—(*She rises disconcerted*) Were it even at the Expence of my Life—(*She walks about uneasy*).—You see, my dear Ma'am, we both have Cause of Discontent ; we are both disappointed,—both crossed in Love,—and so, Ma'am, the least we can do is, both heartily to join to sweeten each other's Cares.

Mrs. Love. Sir Brilliant, I don't understand — (*angrily*.)

Sir Brill. If you will pour the Balm of Love on this poor

poor wounded Heart, you may have the most delicious Revenge against a Husband,——who,——from his own perverse Inclination, his own Inhumanity of Temper,——has for a long time, I have seen it, Madam,——with Vexation seen it,——Yes,——he has long been false to Honour, Love, and you.——

Mrs. Love. This Usage, Sir,——you take my Wrongs too much to Heart, Sir,——(*walking about*). I myself, Sir, can remedy my own Afflictions.——But this Presumption of yours,——upon my word!——This is the most-unparalleled.——(*walks about and flutters her Fan.*)

Sir Brill. Pray, Ma'am, don't break your Fan,——don't break it, Ma'am,——I beg you won't.——

Mrs. Love. This is the most affronting,——Come to a fine Pass, indeed!——(*She stands looking at her Fan*).——Intolerable Assurance!——

Sir Brill. Now am I in a sweet Condition.——The Poet has touched it most exquisitely.——

*She views the Story with attentive Eyes,
And pities Procris, while her Lover dies.*

Mrs. Love. Sir, I must desire you will quit my House immediately.——

Sir Brill. Don't overheat yourself,——consider, my dear Madam.——

Mrs. Love. Sir, I desire——was ever such Rudeness!——(*rings the Bell.*)

Sir Brill. Ma'am, I desist——I have done,——but when you're in a better Humour, pray recollect.——

Mrs. Love. Will no body answer there?

Sir Brill. I retire.——“Those Eyes that tell us what the Sun is made of;——

“Those Hills of driven Snow.——

Enter Muslin hastily.

Sir Brill. Ma'am, your most obedient.——(*Exit.*

Muslin. Did you call, Ma'am?

Mrs. Love. To shew the Gentleman out.——(*walking angrily.*)

Muslin. The Servants are all in the Hall.

Mrs. Love. To be insulted thus by his loose confident Carriage!

Muslin. As I live and breathe, Ma'am, if I was as you, I would not flutter myself about it.—

Mrs. Love. About what?

Muslin. La!—what signifies mincing Matters?—I overheard it all.

Mrs. Love. You did;—did you? (*angrily.*)

Muslin. Ma'am!—

Mrs. Love. It does not signify at present.

Muslin. No, Ma'am, it does not signify, and Revenge is sweet, I think; and by my Troth, I don't see why you should stand on Ceremony with a Husband that stands upon none with you.

Mrs. Love. Again—prithee, Mrs. Malapert, none of your Advice.—How dare you talk in this Manner to me?—Let me hear no more of this impertinent Freedom.—(*walks about.*)

Muslin. No, Ma'am.—It is very well, Ma'am.—I have done, Ma'am.—(*disconcerted, and then she speaks aside.*)—What the Devil is here to do?—An unmannerly thing to go for to huff me in this Manner!—

Mrs. Love. (*Still walking about.*) To make his Character public, and render him the Subject of every Tea-Table throughout this Town, would only serve to widen the Breach, and instead of his Neglect, might call forth his Anger, and settle at last into a fixed Aversion—Lawyers, Parting, and separate Maintenance would ensue.—No,—I must avoid that,—if possible; I will avoid that.—What must be done?—

Muslin. What can she be thinking of now?—The sulky thing, not to be communicative with such a Friend as I am!—What can she mean?—Did you speak to me, Ma'am?—

Mrs. Love. Suppose I were to try that!—*Muslin.*

Muslin. Ma'am!—Now for it.—

Mrs

Mrs. Love. Did John follow your Master's Chariot, as I ordered?

Muslin. He did, Ma'am.

Mrs. Love. Where is he?

Muslin. He's below, Ma'am;—he followed it as far as the Chocolate House in St. James's-Street.

Mrs. Love. Are you sure of that?

Muslin. You may rely upon it.

Mrs. Love. You heard Sir Brilliant deny that Mr. Levenmore visits at this Widow Bellmour's.

Muslin. Lard, Ma'am, he's as full of Fibs as a French Millener,—he does visit there;—I know it all from William,—I'll be hanged in my own Garters if he does not.

Mrs. Love. I know not what to do!—Heigho!—I think I'll venture.—Let my Chair be got ready instantly.

Muslin. Your Chair, Ma'am!—Are you going out, Ma'am?

Mrs. Love. Don't tease me with your Talk, but do as I bid you,—and bring my Capuchin down to the Parlour immediately. *(Exit.)*

Muslin. What is in the Wind now?—An ill-natured Puffs, not to tell me what she is about!—It is no Matter,—she does not know what she is about.—Before I'd lead such a Life, I'd take a Lover's Leap into Rosamond's Pond.—I love to see Company for my Part.—But, Lord blefs me! I had like to have forgot,—Mrs. Sugar-Key comes to my Rout to-night.—I had as live she had staid away,—She's nothing but mere Lumber!—so formal, that she won't play above a Shilling Whist.—How the Devil does she think I'm to make a Shilling Party for her?—There's no such a thing to be done now-a-days,—No body plays Shilling-Whist now. *(Exit in a Passion.)*

End of the First A C T.

A C T

A C T II.

SCENE, a Room at the Widow Bellmour's, in which are disposed up and down, several Chairs, a Toilette, a Book-case, and a Harpsicord; Mignonet her Maid, is settling the Toilette.

Enter Mrs. Bellmour, reading a Volume of Pope.

*Oh! blest with Temper, whose unclouded Ray,
Can make To-morrow cheerful as To-day;
She who can own a Sister's Charms, and hear
Sighs for a Daughter, with unwounded Ear;
That never answers till a Husband cooks,
And if she rules him, never shews she rules;*

Sensible, elegant Pope!

*Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,
Yet has her Humour most when she obeys;
(seems to read on.)*

Mig. Lord love my Mistress!—She's always so happy, and so gay.——

Mrs. Bell. These charming Characters of Women!—'Tis like a Painter's Gallery, where one sees the Portraits of all one's Acquaintance!—Here, *Mignonet*, put this Book in its Place.

Mig. Yes, Ma'am.—There Ma'am, you see your Toilette looks most charmingly.

Mrs. Bell. Does it?——I think it does.—Apropos, where's my new Song?—Here it lies,——I must make myself Mistress of it.—(*Plays and sings a little.*)—I believe I shall conquer it presently, (*rises and goes towards her Toilette*)—This Hair of mine is always tormenting me;——always in Disorder, and straggling out of its Place:—I must absolutely subdue this Lock.—*Mignonet*, do you know that this

is

is a very pretty Song?—'tis written by my Lord Etheridge;—I positively must learn it before he comes.—(*Sings a Line.*)—Do you know, *Mignonet*, that I think my Lord not wholly intolerable?

Mig. Yes, Ma'am, I know that.

Mrs. Bell. Do you?

Mig. And if I have any Skill, Ma'am, I fancy you think him more than tolerable.

Mrs. Bell. Really! then you think I like him, I suppose.—Do ye think I like him?—I don't well know how that is,——and yet I don't know but I do like him;—no,—no,—I don't like him neither,——not absolutely like;——but I could like, if I had a mind to humour myself.——The Man has a Softness of Manner, an elegant Turn of Thinking, and has a Heart—has he a Heart?——yes, I think he has;—and then he is such an Observer of the Manners,——and shews the ridiculous of them with so much Humour.——

Mig. I'll be whipt, if you don't get into the Nouse before the long Nights are over.——Without doubt, Ma'am, my Lord is a pretty Man enough;—but lack-a-day, what o'that?—You know but very little of him,—Your Acquaintance is but very short;—(*Mrs. Bellmour hums a Tune.*) Do, pray my dear Madam, mind what I say,——for I am at times, I assure you, very speculative,—very speculative indeed;—and I see very plainly.——Lord, Ma'am, what am I doing!—I'm talking to you for your own Good, and you're all in the Air, and no more mind one, no, no more, than if I was nothing at all.

Mrs. Bell. (*Hums a Tune still.*) Why indeed you talk wonderfully well upon the Subject; but as I know how the Cards lie, and can play the Game myself, and as I don't know my Song,—why a body is inclined to give that the Preference. (*Sings.*)

Mig. Ma'am I assure you, I am none of those Servants that bargain for their Mistress's Inclinations;—but I see you are going to take a Leap in the Dark.—I don't know what to make of his Manner of coming

ing here, with his Chair always brought into the Hall, and the Curtains drawn close about his Ears, as if— May I never be married, if I don't believe there is something amiss in the Affair.—Dear Heart, Ma'am, if you won't listen to me, what signifies my living with you?—I am of no Service to you. ———

Mrs. Bell, I believe I have conquered the Song ; ———(*Runs to her Glass.*) How do I look To-day? ———Well enough, I think.—Do you think I shall play the Fool, *Mignonnet*, and marry my Lord?

Mig. You have it, Ma'am, thro' the very Heart of you, ———I see that.

Mrs. Bell. Do you think so? ——— May be I may marry, and may be not. ——— Poor Sir *Brilliant Fashion*,—what will become of him? But I won't think about it.

Enter Pompey.

Mrs. Bell. What's the Matter, Pompey?

Pom. There's a Lady below in a Chair, that desires to know if you are at home, Madam.

Mrs. Bell. Has the Lady no Name?

Pom. She did not tell her Name.

Mrs. Bell. How awkward you are! —Well, shew her up. [*Exit Pompey.*]

Mig. Had not you better receive the Lady in the Dining-Room, Ma'am? — Things here are in such Confusion. ———

Mrs. Bell. No, 'twill do very well here. I dare say it is some body I am intimate with, tho' the Boy does not recollect her Name.—Here she comes.

Enter Mrs. Lovemore.

(*They both look with a grave Surprise at each other, then curtsy with an Air of distant Civility.*)

Mrs. Bell. Ma'am, your most obedient,—(*with a kind of Reserve.*)

Mrs. Love. Ma'am, I beg your Pardon for this Intrusion.—(*disconcerted.*)

Mrs.

Mrs. Bell. Pray Ma'am walk in,—won't you please to be seated?—*Mignonet*, reach a Chair.

Mrs. Love. This Chair will do mighty well.

Mrs. Bell. I beg you'll sit from the Door,—I beg you'll sit here, Ma'am.—(*Mrs. Lovemore crosses the Stage, and they salute each other.*)

Mrs. Love. I'm afraid this Visit from one unknown to you, will be inconvenient and troublesome.

Mrs. Bell. Not at all, I dare say;—you need not be at the Trouble of an Apology:—Would you choose a Dish of Chocolate?

Mrs. Love. Much oblig'd to you, Not any.

Mrs. Bell. *Mignonet*, you may withdraw.

[*Exit Mignonet.*]

Mrs. Love. Tho' I have not the Pleasure of your Acquaintance, Ma'am, there is a particular Circumstance which has determined me to take this Liberty with you; for which I intreat your Pardon beforehand.

Mrs. Bell. The Request is wholly unnecessary;—but a particular Circumstance, you say. — Pray Ma'am, to what Circumstance am I indebted for this Honour?

Mrs. Love. I shall appear perhaps very ridiculous, and indeed I am afraid I have done the most absurd Thing. — But Ma'am, from the Character you bear for Tenderness of Disposition, and Generosity of Sentiment, I easily incline to flatter myself, that you will not take Offence at any thing; and that if it is in your Power, you will afford me your Assistance.

Mrs. Bell. You may depend upon me.

Mrs. Love. I will be very ingenuous;— Pray Ma'am, an't you acquainted with a Gentleman whose Name is *Lovemore*?

Mrs. Bell. *Lovemore*! — No,— no such Person in my List. — *Lovemore*! — I don't know him, Ma'am.

Mrs. Love. Ma'am, I beg your Pardon, — I am but where I was. — I won't trouble you any further. (*Going.*)

Mrs.

Mrs. Bell. 'Tis mighty odd, this. (*Aside.*) Madam, I must own my Curiosity is a good deal excited; ——— (*takes her by the Hand.*) — Pray Ma'am, give me leave ——— I beg you will sit down, ——— Pray don't think me impertinent ——— May I beg to know who the Gentleman is?

Mrs. Love. You have such an Air of Frankness and Generosity, that I will open myself to you: I have been married to him these two Years; I admired him for his Understanding, his Sentiment, and Spirit; I thought myself as sincerely loved by him, as my fond Heart could wish, but there is of late, such a strange Revolution in his Temper, I know not what to make of it: ——— Instead of the Looks of Affection, and Expressions of Tendernefs, with which he used to meet me, 'tis nothing now but cold, averted, superficial Civility. — While abroad, he runs on in a wild Career of Pleasure; and to my deep Affliction, has fix'd his Affections upon another Object.

Mrs. Bell. If you mean to consult with me in regard to this Case, I am afraid you have made a wrong Choice; there is something in her Appearance that affects me, (*aside.*) — Pray excuse me, Ma'am, you consider this Matter too deeply. — Men will prove false, and if there is nothing in your Complaint but mere Gallantry on his Side, — upon my Word, I can't think your Case the worse for that.

Mrs. Love. Not the worse!

Mrs. Bell. On the contrary, much better. If his Affections, instead of being alienated, had been extinguish'd, he would have sunk into a downright stupid, habitual Insensibility; from which it might prove impossible to recall him. — In all Love's Bill of Mortality, there is not a more fatal Disorder, — but your Husband is not fallen into that Way. — By your Account, he still has Sentiment, and where there is Sentiment, there is still Room to hope for an Alteration. — But in the other Case, you have the Pain of seeing yourself neglected, and for what? — For nothing at all; — the Man has lost all Sense of Feeling, and

is become to the warm Beams of Wit and Beauty, as impenetrable as an Ice-house.

Mrs. Love. I am afraid, Ma'am, he is too much the Reverse of this, too susceptible of Impressions from every beautiful Object.

Mrs. Bell. Why, so much the better, as I told you already ;—some new Idea has struck his Fancy, and he will be for a while, under the Influence of that.

Mrs. Love. How light she makes of it! (*aside.*)

Mrs. Bell. But it is the Wife's Business to bait the Hook for her Husband with Variety ; and to draw him daily to herself : — That is the whole Affair, I would not make myself uneasy, Ma'am.

Mrs. Love. Not uneasy ! when his Indifference does not diminish my Regard for him ! Not uneasy, when the Man I doat on, no longer fixes his Happiness at home !

Mrs. Bell. Ma'am, you'll give me leave to speak my Mind freely.— I have often observ'd, when the Fiend Jealousy is rous'd, that Women lay out a wonderful deal of Anxiety and Vexation to no Account, when perhaps, if the Truth were known, they shou'd be angry with themselves instead of their Husbands.

Mrs. Love. Angry with myself, Madam ! — Calumny can lay nothing to my Charge, — the Virtue of my Conduct, Madam. —

Mrs. Bell. Look ye there now, — I wou'd have laid my Life, you wou'd be at that, — that's the Folly of us all. — But Virtue is out of the Question at present. — I mean the want of Address, and proper Management ! It is there that most Women fail, — Virtue alone cannot please the Taste of this Age. — It is *La Belle Nature*, — Nature embellish'd by the Advantages of Art, that the Men expect now-a-days.

Mrs. Love. But after being married so long, and behaving all that time with such an Equality. —

Mrs. Bell. Ay, that Equality is the Rock so many split upon. — The Men are now so immers'd in Lu-

xury, that they must have eternal Variety in their Happiness.

Mrs. *Love*. She justifies him.

(*Aside*.)

Mrs. *Bell*. I'll tell you what; I would venture to lay a Pot of Coffee, that the Person who now rivals you in your Husband's Affection, does it without your good Qualities, and even without your Beauty, by the mere Force of agreeable Talents, and Assiduity to please.

Mrs. *Love*. I am afraid that Compliment——

Mrs. *Bell*. Let me ask you, Ma'am, have you ever seen this formidable Person?

Mrs. *Love*. I think I have.

Mrs. *Bell*. What sort of a Woman, Pray?

Mrs. *Love*. Formidable indeed! — She was describ'd to me as one of charming, and rare Accomplishments: And that is fatally too true! — I can see in her the sensible, the spirited, the — in short, in her I see my Ruin.

Mrs. *Bell*. Never throw up the Cards for all that. — Really, Ma'am, without Compliment, you seem to have all the Qualities that can dispute your Husband's Heart with any body; but the Exertion of those Qualities, I am afraid, is suppress'd.--- You'll excuse my Freedom.--- You shou'd counterwork your Rival, by the very same Arts she employs.--- I know a Lady now in your very Situation,--- And what does she do? She consumes herself with eternal Jealousy; whereas, if she wou'd but employ half the Pains she uses in teasing herself, to vie with the Creature that has won her Husband from her,--- to vie with her, I say, in the Arts of pleasing,--- for it is there a Woman's Pride shou'd be piqued,--- wou'd she do that, take my word for it, Victory wou'd declare in her Favour.

Mrs. *Love*. Do you think so, Ma'am?

Mrs. *Bell*. Think so! --- I am sure of it,--- for there is this Advantage on her Side, that Virtue is an Auxiliary in her Cause,--- and Virtue is the best beautifying Fluid for the Complexion; it gives a Lustre

to the Features, that cannot be equalld by any Artifice whatever.

Mrs. Love. What can this mean? I begin to doubt.

(aside,

Mrs. Bell. But even Virtue herself must condescend to call in external Aid. — Her own native Charms wou'd do, if Men were perfect, but that is not the Case; and since Vice can assume Allurements, why should not Truth and Innocence have additional Ornaments also?

Mrs. Love. I begin to think Sir Brilliant has told me truth.

(aside,

Mrs. Bell. I have been married, Ma'am, and am a little in the Secret. — It is much more difficult to keep a heart than win one—After the fatal Words for better for worse, the general way with Wives is to relax into Indolence, and while they are guilty of no Infidelity, they think that is enough: — But they are mistaken, there is a great deal wanting—an Address, a Manner, a Desire of pleasing—an agreeable Contrast in their Conduct, of grave, and gay;—a favourite Poet of mine,—Prior, has expressed this very delicately.

*Above the fix'd and settled Rules
Of Vice, and Virtue, in the Schools,
The better Part should set before 'em
A Grace, a Manner, a Decorum.*

Mrs. Love. But when the natural Temper ———

Mrs. Bell. The natural Temper must be forc'd, Home must be made a Place of Pleasure to the Husband, and the Wife must throw infinite Variety into her Manner;—in short, she must, as it were, multiply herself, and appear to him sundry different Women on different Occasions.—And this, I take to be the whole Mystery; the Way to keep a Man — But I run on at a strange Rate.—Well, to be sure, I'm the giddiest Creature.—Ma'am, will you now give me leave to enquire, how I came to have this Favour? Who recommended me to your Notice? And pray who

was so kind as to intimate that I was acquainted with Mr. *Love-more* ?

Mrs. *Love*. I beg your Pardon for all the Trouble I have given you, and I assure you, 'tis entirely owing to my being told that his Visits were frequent here.

Mrs. *Bell*. His Visits frequent here ! — They have imposed upon you, I assure you, — and they have told you, perhaps, that I have robbed you of Mr. *Love-more's* Heart ! — Scandal is always buzzing about, — but, I assure you, I have not meddled with his Heart, — Oh ! Lud, I hear a Rap at the Door, I positively won't be at home. *(Rings a Bell.)*

Enter Mignonet.

Mign. Did you call, Madam ?

Mrs. *Bell*. I am not at home.

Mign. 'Tis Lord *Etheridge*, Ma'am, — he's coming up Stairs, the Servants told him you were within.

Mrs. *Bell*. Was ever any thing so cross ? Tell him there is Company with me, and he won't come in. Mignonet, run to him.

Mrs. *Love*. Ma'am, I beg I mayn't hinder you.

Mrs. *Bell*. Our Conversation begins to grow interesting, and I would not have you go for the World. I won't see my Lord.

Mrs. *Love*. I beg you will, don't let me prevent, I'll step into another Room.

Mrs. *Bell*. Will you be so kind ? — There is a Study of Books in that Room, if you will be so obliging as to amuse yourself there, I shall be glad to resume this Conversation again. — He sha'n't stay long.

Mrs. *Love*. I beg you will be in no Hurry, I can wait with Pleasure.

Mrs. *Bell*. This is a Lover of mine ; and a Husband, and a Lover shou'd be treated in the same Manner ; perhaps it will divert you to hear how I manage him. I hear him on the Stairs, for Heaven's sake, make haste. Mignonet, shew the Way.

Mign.

Mign. This way, Madam, this way.

(Exeunt Mrs. Love. and Mignionet.)

Mrs. Bell. Let me see how I look to receive him.

(Runs to her Glass.)

Enter Lovemore, with a Star and Ribband as Lord Etheridge.

Mrs. Bell. *(Looking in her Glass.)* Lord Etheridge! Walk in, my Lord.

Love. *(Repeats.)*

*A heavenly Image in the Glass appears,
To that she bends, to that her Eyes she rears,
Repairs her Smiles ———*

Mrs. Bell. Repairs her Smiles, my Lord! I don't like your Application of that Phrase. — Fray, my Lord, are my Smiles out of Repair, like an old House in the Country, that wants a Tenant?

Love. Nay, now, that's wresting the Words from their visible Intention. ——— You can't suppose I thought you want Repair, whatever may be the Case, Ma'am, with regard to the want of a Tenant.

Mrs. Bell. And so you think I really want a Tenant! And perhaps you imagine too, that I am going to put up a Bill, *(Looking in her Glass)* to signify to all Passers-by, that here is a Mansion to be let. — Well, I swear, I don't think it would be a bad Scheme. — I have a great mind to do so.

Love. And he who has the Preference ———

Mrs. Bell. Will be very happy, I know you mean so. But I'll let it to none but a single Gentleman, that you may depend upon.

Love. What the Devil does she mean by that? She has not got an Inkling of the Affair, I hope. *(Aside.)* None else could presume, Madam, to ———

Mrs. Bell. And then it must be a Lease for Life, — but no body will be troubled with it — I shall never get it off my Hands. — Do you think I shall, my Lord?

Love. Why that Question, Madam? You know I

am devoted to you, even if it were to be bought with Life.

Mrs. Bell. Heav'ns ! what a dying Swain you are ! And does your Lordship really intend to be guilty of Matrimony ?——Lord, what a Question have I asked ?——Well, to be sure, I am a very Mad-cap !——My Lord, don't you think me a strange Mad-cap ?

Love. A Wildness like yours, that arises from Vivacity and Sentiment together, serves only to exalt your Beauty, and give new Poignancy to every Charm.

Mrs. Bell. Well, upon my word you have said it finely !——But you are in the right, my Lord.——I hate your pensive, melancholy Beauty, that sits like a well-grown Vegetable in a Room for an Hour together, till at last she is animated to the violent Exertion of saying yes or no, and then enters into a Matter-of-fact Conversation, “ Have you heard the News ? Miss *Beverly* is going to be married to Captain *Shoulderknot*.——My Lord *Mortgage* has had another Tumble at *Arthur's*, Sir *William Squanderstock* has lost his Election. They say, short Aprons are coming into Fashion again.”

Love. Oh, Lord ! a Matter-of-fact Conversation is insupportable.

Mrs. Bell. Pray, my Lord, have you ever observed the Manner of one Lady's accosting another at *Ranelagh* ?——She comes up to you with a demure Look of insipid Serenity,—— makes you a solemn Salute—— “ Ma'am, I am overjoyed to meet you,——you look charmingly.——But, dear Madam, did you hear what happened to us all the other Night ?——We were going home from the Opera, Ma'am ;——you know my Aunt *Roly-Poly*,——It was her Coach,——there was she,——and Lady *Betty Fidget*,—— Your most obedient Servant, Ma'am, (*Curtisying to another, as it were going by*) Lady *Betty*, you know, is recovered——every body thought it over with her,——but Doctor *Snakeroot* was called in, no not Doctor *Snake-root*, Doctor *Bolus* it was, and so he altered the Course
of

of the Medicines,——and so my Lady Betty recovered ;——well, there was she and Sir George Bragwell,——a pretty Man Sir George,——finest Teeth in the World.——Your Ladyship's most obedient.—— We expected you last Night,——but you did not come,——he ! he !——And so there was he and the rest of us,——and so turning the Corner of *Bond-Street*, the Villain of a Coachman——How do you do, Madam !——the Villain of a Coachman overturned us all ;——my Aunt *Roly-Poly*, was frightened out of her Wits, and Lady Betty has been *nervish* ever since :—— Only think of that,——such Accidents in Life.——Ma'am, your most obedient,——I am proud to see you look so well."

Love. An exact Description,—— the very thing —— ha ! ha !

Mrs. Bell. And then from this Conversation they all run to Cards,——“ *Quadrille has murdered Wit.*”

Love. Ay, and Beauty too ; for upon these Occasions, “ the Passions in the Features are——” I have seen many a beautiful Countenance change in a Moment, into absolute Deformity ; the little Loves and Graces that before sparkled in the Eye, bloom'd in the Cheek, and smil'd about the Mouth, all fly off in an Instant, and resign the Features which they before adorn'd, to Fear, to Anger, to Grief, and the whole Train of fretful Passions.

Mrs. Bell. Ay, and the Rage we poor Women are often betrayed into on these Occasions.——

Love. Very true, Ma'am ; and if, by chance, they do bridle and hold in a little, the Struggle they undergo is the most ridiculous Sight imaginable.——I have seen an Oath quivering upon the pale Lip of a reigning Toast, for Half an Hour together ; yes, and I have seen an uplifted Eye blaspheming Providence for the Loss of an odd Trick ;—— and then at last, when the whole Room burst out into one loud universal Uproar,——“ My Lord, you flung away the Game.——No, Ma'am, it was you.—— Sir George, why did not you ruff the Diamond ? Captain Hazard, why

why did not you lead through the Honour? Ma'am, it was not the Play.—Pardon me, Sir,—But Ma'am; —But Sir,—— I would not play with you for Straws.—Don't you know what *Hoyle* says? If A and B are Partners against C and D, and the Game Nine-all, A and B have won three Tricks, and C and D four Tricks; C leads his Suit; D puts up the King, then returns the Suit, A passes, C puts up the Queen; B ruffs the next;" and so A and B, and C and D are bang'd about; and all is Jargon, Confusion, Uproar, and Wrangling, and Nonsense, and Noise.—Ha! ha!

Mrs. *Bell*. Ha! ha! A fine Picture of a Rout; but one must play sometimes——we must let our Friends pick our Pockets sometimes, or they'll drop our Acquaintance.—Pray my Lord, do you never play?

Love. Play, Ma'am! I must lie to the End of the Chapter, (*aside*,) play!—now and then out of Necessity;—otherwise,——I never touch a Card.

Mrs. *Bell*. Oh! very true, you dedicate your Time to the Muses; a downright rhyming Peer.—Do you know, my Lord, that I am charm'd with your Song?

Love. Are you?

Mrs. *Bell*. I am indeed;—I think you'd make a very tolerable *Vauxhall* Poet.

Love. You flatter me, Ma'am.

Mrs. *Bell*. No, as I live and breathe, I don't;—and do you know that I can sing it already?—Come, you shall hear me,——you shall hear it. (*sings*.)

I.

*Attend all ye Fair, and I'll tell ye the Art
To bind every Fancy with ease in your Chains,
To hold in soft Fetters the conjugal Heart,
And banish from Hymen his Doubts and his Pains.*

II.

*When Juno accepted the Cestus of Love,
At first she was handsome; she charming became;
With Skill the soft Passions it taught her to move,
To kindle at once, and to keep up the Flame.*

III. 'Tis

III.

'Tis this gives the Eyes all their Magic and Fire ;
The Voice melting Accents ; impassions the Kifs ,
Confers the sweet Smiles that awaken Desire,
And plants round the Fair each Incentive to Blifs.

IV.

Thence flows the gay Chat, more than Reason that charms ;
The eloquent Blush, that can Beauty improve ;
The fond Sigh, the fond Vow, the soft Touch that alarms,
The tender Disdain, the Renewal of Love.

V.

Ye Fair take the Cessus, and practise its Art ;
The Mind unaccomplish'd, mere Features are vain,
Exert your sweet Power, you conquer each Heart,
And the Loves, Joys and Graces, shall walk in your Train.

Love. My Poetry is infinitely oblig'd to you, for the Embellishments your Voice and Manner confer upon it.

Mrs. Bell. Oh fulsome !——I sing horridly, and I look horridly ; (*goes to the Glass*) —— How do I look, my Lord ?——but don't tell me,——I won't be told.——I see you are studying a Compliment, and I hate Compliments ;——well, what is it ? let's hear your Compliment, why don't you compliment me ?——I won't hear it now.—But pray now how came you to choose so grave a Subject as connubial Happiness ?——Do you think there is any such Thing on Earth as connubial Happiness ?

Love. Close and particular that Question ; (*aside*.) Why Ma'am, in general, one does not see the Talents of a Wife, dedicated to the Happiness of the Husband.——I have known Ladies, who, on the Eve of their Wedding, appear'd like the very Graces, in a few Weeks after the Ceremony become very Slat-terns, both in their Persons and Understandings ; no Solicitude on their Side to appear amiable.—Distaste insinuates itself, by Degrees, into the Husband's Mind, the Bands of Hymen grow loose ; and thus, with perhaps the best Disposition in the World, he is oblig'd

to start wild, and away he urges where Youth and a Career of Spirits hurry him; and so good-night to all real and solid Happiness.—But with one accomplish'd as you are, Ma'am—

Mrs. Bell. To be sure, with me no body could be otherwise than happy;—was not that what you was going to say?—I know it was.—Well upon my word you have drawn your Picture so well, that one would imagine you had a Wife at home to sit for it.

Love. Ma'am, (*embarrass'd*) the Compliment,—a—you are but laughing at me;—I—I—I,—Zouns, I am afraid she begins to smoke me, (*aside*).—A very scanty Knowledge of the World will serve; and—and there is no need of one's own Experience in these Cases:—nor had I talk'd so, were I not persuaded you will make an Exception to the general Rule.

Mrs. Bell. O Lard, you are going to plague me again with your odious Solicitations, but I won't hear 'em;—you must be gone.—If I should be weak enough to listen to you, what would become of Sir Brilliant Fashion?

Love. Sir Brilliant Fashion!

Mrs. Bell. Yes, don't you know Sir Brilliant Fashion?

Love. No, Ma'am, I don't know the Gentleman: I beg Pardon if he is your Acquaintance, but, from what I have heard of him, I should not choose him to be among my Intimates.

Enter Mignonet in a violent Hurry.

Mign. O Lud! I am frighted out of my Senses,—The poor Lady—Where's the Hartshorn-drops?

Love. The Lady! What Lady?

Mign. Never stand asking what Lady,—she has fainted away, Ma'am, all of a sudden. Give me the Drops.—

Mrs. Bell. Let me run to her Assistance.—Adieu, my Lord,—I shall be at home in the Evening;—Mignonet step this Way.—My Lord, you'll excuse me; I expect you in the Evening.

(Exit.
Love.

Love. I shall wait on you, Ma'am. What Villain am I to carry on this Scheme, against so much Beauty, Innocence, and Merit?—Ay, and to have the Impudence to assume this Badge of Honour, to cover the most unwarrantable Purposes!—But no Reflection, have her I must; and that quickly too.—If I don't prevail soon, I'm undone—she'll find me out:—Egad I'll be with her betimes this Evening, and press her with all the Vehemence of Love.—Women have their soft, unguarded Moments, and who knows?—But to take the Advantage of the Openness and Gaiety of her Heart! and then my Friend *Sir Brilliant*, will it be fair to supplant him?—Prithee be quiet, my dear Conscience; don't you be meddling; don't interrupt a Gentleman in his Amusements.—Don't you know, my good Friend, that Love has no Respect of Persons, knows no Laws of Friendship;—besides, 'tis all my Wife's Fault—why don't she strive to make home agreeable?

*For foreign Pleasures, foreign Joy, I roam,
No Thought of Peace or Happiness at home.*

(going.)

(Sir Brilliant is heard singing within.)

What the Devil is Madam Fortune at now?—
Sir Brilliant, by all that's odious!—No Place to conceal in!—No Escape!—The Door is locked!—*Mignonet, Mignonet*, open the Door—

Mign. (within) You can't come in here, Sir.

Love. This cursed Star, and this Ribband, will ruin me.—Let me get off this confounded Tell-tale Evidence.—

(Takes off the Ribband in a hurry.)

Enter Sir Brilliant.

Sir Brill My dear Madam, I most heartily rejoice

—Ha!—*Love* more!

Love. Your Slave, *Sir Brilliant*, your Slave,

(hiding the Star with his Hat.)

Sir

Sir Brill. How is this? I did not think you had been acquainted here!

Love. I came to look for you,—I thought to have found you here; ——— and so I have scrap'd an Acquaintance with the Lady, and made it subservient to your Purposes. ——— I have been giving a great Character of you.

Sir Brill. Well, but what's the Matter? ——— What are you fumbling about? ——— (*pulls the Hat.*)

Love. 'Sdeath have a care! ——— for Heaven's sake ——— (*crams his Handkerchief there.*)

Sir Brill. What the Devil ails you?

Love. Taken so unaccountably, ——— my old Complaint. ——— *Sir Brilliant*, yours.

Sir Brill. Zowns Man, you had best sit down.

Love. Here's a Business, — (*aside,*) — pray let me pass; — my old Complaint. ———

Sir Brill. What Complaint?

Love. I must have a Surgeon, ——— occasioned by the Stroke of a Tennis-Ball; ——— my Lord *Rackett's* unlucky Left-hand; ——— Let me pass, there is certainly something forming there, — let me pass. ——— To be caught is the Devil, (*aside,*) don't name my Name, you'll ruin all that I said for you, if you do. ——— *Sir Brilliant*, your Servant. ——— There is certainly something forming. [Exit.

Sir Brill. What can this mean? I must have this explained. ——— Then Mrs. *Lovemore's* Suspicions are right: I must come at the Bottom of it. ——— Ay, ay; ——— there is something forming here! ———

Enter Mrs. Bellmour.

Sir Brill. My dear Mrs. *Bellmour*.

Mrs. Bell. Heavens! What brings you here?

Sir Brill. I congratulate with myself upon the Felicity of meeting you thus at home.

Mrs. Bell. Your Visit is unseasonable, you must be gone.

Sir Brill. Madam, I have a thousand Things ———

Mrs.

Mrs. Bell. Well, well, another time.

Sir Brill. Of the tenderest Import.

Mrs. Bell. I can't hear you now;—fly this Moment:—I have a Lady taken ill in the next Room.

Sir Brill. Ay, and you have had a Gentleman taken ill here too.

Mrs. Bell. Do you dispute my Will and Pleasure;—fly this Instant, (*turns him out.*) So I'll make sure of the Door.

Enter Mrs. Lovemore, leaning on Mignonet.

Mign. This Way, Madam, here's more Air in this Room.

Mrs. Bell. How do you find yourself, Ma'am? Pray sit down.

Mrs. Love. My Spirits were too weak to bear up any longer, against such a Scene of Villainy.

Mrs. Bell. Villainy!—What Villainy?

Mrs. Love. Of the blackest Dye!—I see, Madam, you are acquainted with my Husband.

Mrs. Bell. Acquainted with your Husband! (*angrily.*)

Mrs. Love. A Moment's Patience, Madam.—That Gentleman that was here with you is my Husband.

Mrs. Bell. Lord Etheridge your Husband!

Mrs. Love. Lord Etheridge, as he calls himself, and as you have been made to call him also, is no other than Mr. Lovemore.

Mrs. Bell. And has he then been base enough to assume that Title, to ensnare me to my Undoing?

Mign. Well, for certain, I believe the Devil's in me, I am certainly a Witch, for I always thought him a sly one.

Mrs. Love. To see my Husband carrying on this dark Business,—to see the Man I have loved,—the Man I have esteemed,—the Man, I am afraid, I must still love, tho' esteem him again I cannot,—to be a Witness to his complicated Wickedness,—it was too much for Sensibility like mine,—I felt the Shock too severely,—and sunk under it.

D

Mrs.

Mrs. Bell. I am ready to do the same myself now. I sink into the very Ground with Amazement. The first time I ever saw him was at old Mrs. Loveit's,—she introduc'd him to me;—the Appointment was of her own making.

Mrs. Love. You know her Character, I suppose, Madam.

Mrs. Bell. She's a Woman of Fashion, and sec's a great deal of good Company.

Mrs. Love. Very capable of such an Action for all that.

Mrs. Bell. Well, I cou'd never have imagin'd that any Woman wou'd be so base as to pass such a Cheat upon me. Step this Moment, and give Orders never to let him within my Doors again. (*To her Maid, who goes out.*) I am much oblig'd to you, Ma'am, for this Visit. To me it is highly fortunate, but I am sorry for your Share in't, as the Discovery brings you nothing but a Conviction of your Husband's Baseness.

Mrs. Love. I'm determin'd to be no further uneasy about him, nor will I live a Day longer under his Roof.

Mrs. Bell. Hold, hold, make no violent Resolutions.—You'll excuse me, I can't help feeling for you, and I think this Incident may be still converted to your Advantage.

Mrs. Love. That can never be,—I am lost beyond Redemption.

Mrs. Bell. Don't decide that too rashly.—Come, come, a Man is worth thinking a little about, before one throws the hideous Thing away for ever. Besides, you have heard his Sentiments. Perhaps you are a little to blame yourself.—We will talk this very coolly. Ma'am, you have sav'd me,—and I must now discharge the Obligation.—You shall stay and dine with me.

Mrs. Love. I can't possibly do that,—I won't give you so much Trouble.

Mrs.

Mrs. Bell. It will be a Pleasure, Ma'am,——you shall stay with me, I will not part with you, and I will lay such a Plan, as may ensure him yours for ever.——Come, come, my dear Madam, don't you still think he has some good Qualities to apologize for his Vices?

Mrs. Love. I must own, I still hope he has.

Mrs. Bell. Very well then, and he may still make Atonement for all; and let me tell you, that a Man who can make proper Atonement for his Faults, should not be entirely despis'd.—Allons! [*Exeunt.*]

A C T III.

SCENE, *An Apartment at Mr. Lovemore's.*

*Enter Mrs. Lovemore elegantly dress'd;
Muslin following her.*

Muslin. WHY to be sure, Ma'am it is so for certain, and you are very much in the right of it.

Mrs. Love. I fancy I am:—I see the Folly of my former Conduct, and I am determin'd never to let my Spirits sink into a melancholy State again.

Muslin. Why, that's the very thing, Ma'am, the very thing I have been always preaching up to you.——Did not I always say, see Company, Ma'am, take your Share of Pleasure, and never break your Heart for any Man. This is what I always said.

Mrs. Love. It's very well, you need not say any more now.

Muslin. I always said so!—And what did the World say? Heavens bless her for a sweet Woman! And a Plague go with him for an inhuman, barbarous, bloody, murdering Brute.

Mrs. Love. No more of these Liberties, I desire.

Muslin. Nay, don't be angry,—they did say so indeed.—

deed.—But dear Heart, how every body will be overjoy'd, when they find you have pluck'd up a little,—as for me, it gives me new Life, to have so much Company in the House, and such a Racketing at the Door with Coaches and Chairs, enough to hurry a body out of one's Wits.—Lard, this is another thing, and you look quite like another thing, Ma'am, and that Dress so becomes you,—I suppose, Ma'am, you'll never wear your Negligee again. It is not fit for you indeed, Ma'am.—It might pass very well with some Folks, Ma'am, but the like of you——

Mrs. Love. Prithce truce with your Tongue, and see who is coming up Stairs.

Enter Mrs. Bellmour.

Mrs. Love. *Mrs. Bellmour,* I revive at the Sight of you. *Muslin,* do you step down Stairs, and do as I have ordered you.

Muslin. What the Duce can she be at now? [*Exit.*

Mrs. Bell. You see I am punctual to my Time.—Well, I admire your Dress of all things.—Did you buy this Silk on *Ludgate-Hill*?—It's mighty pretty.

Mrs. Love. I am glad you like it,—But under all this Appearance of Gaiety, I have at the Bottom but an aching Heart.

Mrs. Bell. Be rul'd by me, and I'll answer for the Event.—Why really, now you look just as you shou'd do.—Why shou'd you neglect so fine a Figure?

Mrs. Love. You are so civil, *Mrs. Bellmour*——

Mrs. Bell. And so true too!—What was beautiful before, is now heightened by the additional Ornaments of Dress; and if you will but animate and inspire the whole, by those Graces of the Mind, which I am sure you possess, the Impression cannot fail of being effectual upon all Beholders, and even upon the depraved Mind of *Mr. Lovemore*.—You have not heard any thing of him since,—have you?

Mrs.

Mrs. Love. No,—no Account at all of him.

Mrs. Bell. I can tell you something.—He has been at my House. You know I had promis'd to be at home for him,—not being let in, my Servants tell me, he was strangely disconcerted. knit his Brow, storm'd, rav'd, wonder'd, and expostulated, and then at last, went off as sulky as a *Russian* General, when a Garrison refuses to capitulate.

Mrs. Love. If he has no other Haunts, he may perhaps come home.

Mrs. Bell. I wish he may.—Well, and have you got together a deal of Company?

Mrs. Love. Pretty well.

Mrs. Bell. That's right,—shew him that you will consult your own Pleasure.—Is Sir Brilliant of the Party?

Mrs. Love. Apropos,—as soon as I came home I received a Letter from him; my Maid had taken it in.—He there presses his Addresses with great Warmth, begs to see me again, and has something particular to tell me,—you shall see it.—Oh! Lud, I have not it about me,—I left it in my dressing Room, I believe; you shall see it by and by, I took your Advice, and sent him Word he might come;—that Lure brought him hither immediately,—he makes no Doubt of his Success with me.

Mrs. Bell. Well! two such Friends as Sir Brilliant and Mr. Lovemore, I believe, never existed!

Mrs. Love. Their Falshood to each other is unparalleled.—I left Sir Brilliant at the Whist-Table, as soon as the Rubber's out, he'll certainly quit his Company in Pursuit of me.—(*A Rap at the Door.*) As I live, I believe this is Mr. Lovemore.

Mrs. Bell. If it is, every thing goes on swimmingly.

Mrs. Love. I hear his Voice; it is he.—How my Heart beats!

Mrs. Bell. Courage, and the Day's our own.—Where must I run?

Mrs. Love. In there, Ma'am, make haste,——
I hear his Step on the Stair-head.

Mrs. Bell. Success attend you,——I am gone. (*Exit.*)

Mrs. Love. alone. I am frighten'd out of my Senses,
——what the Event may be I fear to think,——but I must
go thro' with it.

Enter Lovemore.

Mrs. Love. Mr. Lovemore, you're welcome home.

Love. Mrs. Lovemore, your Servant. (*without looking at her.*)

Mrs. Love. It's somewhat rare to see you at home
so early.

Love. I said I wou'd come home, did not I?——I
always like to be as good as my word.——What cou'd
she mean by this Usage? to make an appointment,
and break it thus abruptly! (*aside.*)

Mrs. Love. He seems to muse upon it. (*aside.*)

Love. I can't tell what to make of it,——she does
not mean to do so infamous a Thing as to jilt me.
(*aside*) Oh, Lord! I am wonderfully tir'd. (*Yawns,*
and sinks into an arm'd Chair.)

Mrs. Love. You an't indispos'd, I hope, my Dear.

Love. No, my Dear, —— I thank you,—— I am very
well;—— a little fatigu'd only, with jolting over the
Stones all the way from the city.—— I stay'd to dine
with the old Banker,—— I have been there ever since I
went out in the Morning.—— Confoundedly tir'd.——
Where's William?

Mrs. Love. Did you want any thing?

Love. Only my Cap and Slippers.—— I am not in
Spirits, I think. (*Yawns.*)

Mrs. Love. You never are in Spirits at home, Mr.
Lovemore.

Love. I beg your Pardon, —— I never am any
where more chearful, (*stretching his Arms.*) I wish I
may die, if I an't very happy at home,——very (*yawns*)
——very happy!

Mrs. Love. I can hear otherwise.—— I'm inform'd
that

that Mr. Lovemore is the Inspirer of Mirth and good Humour wherever he goes.

Love. Oh! you over-rate me; upon my Soul you do.

Mrs. Love. I can hear, Sir, that no Person's Company is so acceptable to the Ladies; that 'tis your Wit that inspires every thing, — that you have your Compliment for one, your Smile for another, a Whisper for a third, and so on, Sir, — you divide your Favours, and are every where, but at home, all Whim, Vivacity, and Spirit.

Love. No, — no, — (*laughing*,) how can you talk so? — I swear, I can't help laughing at the Fancy. — I all Whim, Vivacity, and Spirit! I shall burst my Sides, — How can you banter one so? — I divide my Favours too! — Oh, Heavens! — I can't stand this Raillery, — such a Description of me! — I that am rather saturnine, and of a serious Cast, and inclin'd to be pensive! I can't help laughing at the Oddity of the Conceit. — Oh Lord! Oh Lord! (*laughs*,)

Mrs. Love. Just as you please, Sir. — I see that I am ever to be treated with Indifference. (*walks across the Stage*,)

Love. (*rises and walks the contrary way*,) I can't put this Widow Bellmour out of my Head. (*aside*,)

Mrs. Love. If I had done any thing to provoke this Usage, — this cold, insolent contempt —

Love. I shall never be at rest 'till I know the Bottom of it. — I wish I had done with that Business intirely; but my Desires are kindled, and must be satisfy'd. (*aside*,)

(*They walk for some time silently by each other*,)

Mrs. Love. What Part of my Conduct gives you Offence, Mr. Lovemore?

Love. Still harping upon that ungrateful String! — but prithee don't set me a laughing again. — Offence! — nothing gives me Offence, Child: — You know I am very fond. — (*yawns and walks*,) — I like you of all Things, and think you a most admirable Wife; — prudent,

prudent, managing, — careless of your own Person, and very attentive to mine; — not much addicted to Pleasure, — grave, — retir'd, — and domestic; — govern your House, — pay the Tradesmens bills, (*yawns*) scold the Servants, and love your Husband: — Upon my Soul, a very good Wife! — As good a Sort of a Wife (*yawns*) as a body might wish to have. — Where's William? — I must go to Bed. —

Mrs. Love. To Bed so early! — Had not you better join the Company?

Love. I shan't go out to Night.

Mrs. Love. But I mean the Company in the Dining-Room.

Love. What Company? (*stares at her.*)

Mrs. Love. That I invited to a Rout.

Love. A Rout in my House! — and you dressed out too! — What is all this?

Mrs. Love. You have no Objection, I hope. —

Love. Objection! — no, I like Company, you know, of all Things; — I'll go and join them: — Who are they all?

Mrs. Love. You know 'em all; — and there's your Friend Sir Brilliant there.

Love. Is he there? — I'm glad of it. —

But pray now, how comes this about?

Mrs. Love. I intend to do it often.

Love. Do ye?

Mrs. Love. Ay, and not look tamely on, while you revel luxuriously in a Course of Pleasure; I shall pursue my own Plan of Diversion.

Love. Do so, do so, Ma'am, the Change in your Temper will be very pleasing.

Mrs. Love. I shall indeed, Sir, — I'm in earnest.

Love. By all means follow your own Inclinations.

Mrs. Love. And so I shall, Sir, I assure ye. (*sings.*)

*No more I pine,
Content is mine;*

That Sunshine of the Breast!

The

The Pangs of Love
No more I prove;
No Cares disturb my Rest.

Love. What the Devil is come over her? and what, in the Name of Wonder, does all this mean?

Mrs. Love. Mean Sir! ---- it means ---- it means ---- it means -- how can you ask me what it means? -- Well to be sure, the Sobriety of that Question! ---- Do you think a Woman of Spirit can have Leisure to tell her Meaning, when she is all Air, Alertness, Pleasure, and Enjoyment?

Love. She's mad! ---- Stark mad!

Mrs. Love. You're mistaken, Sir, ---- not mad, but in Spirits, that's all; -- no Offence I hope! -- Am I too flighty for you? -- perhaps I am, ---- you are of a saturnine Disposition, inclin'd to think a little, or so. -- Well don't let me interrupt you; don't let me be of any Inconvenience, ---- that would be the impolitest thing -- for a married Couple to interfere and encroach on each other's Pleasures, ---- Oh hideous! it would be gothic to the last Degree. Ha! ha! ha!

Love. (*forcing a Laugh*) Ha! ha! ---- Ma'am, you, Ha! ha! you are perfectly right.

Mrs. Love. Nay but I don't like that Laugh now, -- I positively don't like it; can't you laugh out as you were us'd to do? for my part, I'm determin'd to do nothing else all the rest of my Life.

Love. This is the most astonishing thing! Ma'am, I don't rightly comprehend ----

Mrs. Love. Oh Lud! Oh Lud! ---- with that important Face. -- Well but come now, what don't you comprehend?

Love. There is something in this Treatment that I don't so well ----

Mrs. Love. Oh! are you there, Sir? -- How quickly they, who have no Sensibility for the Peace and Happiness of others, can feel for themselves, Mr. Love -- But that's a grave Reflection, and I hate Reflection.

Love

Love. What has she got into her Head? — This sudden Change, Mrs. *Love*more, let me tell you, is a little alarming, and —

Mrs. Love. Nay, don't be frighten'd, — there is no harm in innocent Mirth, I hope; — never look so grave upon it. — I assure ye, Sir, that tho' on your Part, you seem determined to offer constant Indignities to your Wife, — and tho' the Laws of Retaliation wou'd in some sort exculpate her, if, when provok'd to the utmost, — exasperated beyond all enduring, she should in her Turn, make him know what it is to receive an Injury in the tenderest Point —

Love. Madam! (*angrily.*)

Mrs. Love. Well, well, don't be frighten'd, I say, I shan't retaliate: — my own Honour will secure you there; — you may depend upon it. — You won't come and play a Game at Cards? — Well, do as you like; — well, — you won't come? No, no, I see you won't. — What say you to a Bit of Supper with us? — Nor that neither? — Follow your Inclinations, it is not material where a body eats. — The Company expects me; your Servant Mr. *Love*more, yours, yours. (*Exit, singing.*)

Love. alone. This is a Frolic I never saw her in before! — Laugh all the rest of my Life! Laws of Retaliation! — an Injury in the tenderest Point! — the Company expects me, — your Servant my Dear, yours, yours! (*mimicking her*) What the Devil is all this? — Some of her Female Friends have been tampering with her. — Zouns! — I must begin to look a little sharp after Madam. — I'll go this Moment into the Card-Room, and watch whom she whispers with, whom she ogles with, and every Circumstance that can lead to — (*going.*)

Enter Muslin in a hurry.

Muslin. Madam, Madam, — here's your Letter, — I would not for all the World that my Master —

Love. What, is she mad too? What's the matter, Woman?

Muslin.

Muslin. Nothing, Sir,—nothing,—I wanted a word with my Lady,—that's all, Sir.

Love. You wou'd not for the World that your Master,—What was you going to say?—What Paper's that?

Muslin. Paper, Sir!

Love. Let me see it.

Muslin. Lard, Sir!—how can you ask a body for such a thing. 'Tis a Letter to me, Sir,—a Letter from the Country,—a Letter from my Sister, Sir,—she bids me buy her a *Shiver de Fize* Cap, and a Sixteenth in the Lottery; and tells me of a Number she dreamt of, that's all, Sir,—I'll put it up.

Love. Let me look at it,—give it me this Moment? (*reads.*) To Mrs. Lovemore!—*Brilliant Fashion.* This is a Letter from the Country, is it?

Muslin. That, Sir,—that is—no, Sir,—no,—that's not Sister's Letter.—If you'll give me that back, Sir, I'll shew you the right one.

Love. Where did you get this?

Muslin. Sir?

Love. Where did you get it?—Tell me Truth.

Muslin. Dear heart, you fright a body so—in the Parlour, Sir,—I found it there.

Love. Very well!—Leave the Room.

Muslin. The Devil fetch it, I was never so out in my Politics, in all my Days. (*Exit.*)

Love. alone. A pretty Epistle truly this seems to be,—let me read it.

“Permit me, dear Madam, to throw myself on my Knees, (for on my Knees I must address you) and in that humble Posture, to implore your Compassion.”—*Compassion with a Vengeance on him—(walks about)*

“Think you see me now with tender, melting, supplicating Eyes, languishing at your Feet?”—*Very well, Sir,*—“Can you find it in your Heart to persist in Cruelty?—Grant me but Access to you once more, and in Addition to what I already said this Morning, I will urge such Motives”——*urge Motives will ye—*“as will suggest to you, that you shou'd no longer hesitate

hesitate in Gratitude, to reward him, who still on his Knees, here makes a Vow to you of eternal Constancy and Love.

Brilliant Fashion."

So ; so ! so ! — your very humble Servant, Sir *Brilliant Fashion* ! — This is your Friendship for me, is it ? — you're mighty kind indeed, Sir, — but I thank you as much as if you had really done me the Favour, — and, Mrs. *Lovemore*, I'm your humble Servant too. — She intends to laugh all the rest of her Life ! This Letter will change her Note. — Odsso, yonder she comes along the Gallery, and Sir *Brilliant* in full Chace of her. — They come this way, — cou'd I but detect them both now ! I'll step aside, and who knows but the Devil may tempt 'em to their undoing, — at least I'll try, — a polite Husband I am — There's the Coast clear for you, Madam. (Exit.

Enter Mrs. Lovemore, Sir Brilliant after her.

Mrs. *Love*. I tell you, Sir *Brilliant*, your Civility is odious, — your Compliments fulsome, — and your Solicitations impertinent, Sir, — I must make use of harsh Language, Sir, — you provoke me to it and I can't refrain.

Sir *Brill*. By all my Hopes we are now conveniently alone. (*aside.*) Not retiring to Solitude and Discontent again, I hope, Madam ! — Have a Care, my dear Mrs. *Lovemore*, of a Relapse.

Mrs. *Love*. No Danger of that, Sir, don't be solicitous about me. — Why wou'd you leave the Company ? let me intreat you to return, Sir.

Sir *Brill*. By Heaven, there is more Rapture in being one Moment *vis-a-vis* with you, than in the Company of a whole Drawing-Room of Beauties. — Round you are melting Pleasures, tender Transports, youthful Loves, and blooming Graces, all unself, neglected, and despis'd, by a tasteless, cold, languid, unimpassion'd Husband, while they might be all so much better employ'd to the Purposes of Extasy and Bliss.

Mrs. *Love*. I am amaz'd, Sir, at this Liberty, —
What

what Action of my Life has authoriz'd such barefac'd Assurance?—and for what Reason^o do you think so meanly of me, as to imagine that I have not a greater Regard for my Reputation, and for what the World may say, Sir?

Sir Brill. The World, Ma'am,——the World will justify you—she serv'd him right—they will all agree in it,——there will be but one Opinion about it;——that is, Ma'am, if the World should know it;——but our Loves may be as concealed, as Secrets undiscover'd yet by mortal Eye.——By all that's soft, it goes down with her like a Dish of Tea. (*aside.*) And so, Madam, since I have convinc'd you,——and since the Time, the Place, and mutual Ardor all concur——

Mrs. Love. Sir, I am not to be treated in this Manner,——and, I assure you, Sir, that were I not afraid of the evil Consequences that might follow, I should not hesitate a Moment to acquaint Mr. Lovemore with your whole Behaviour.

Sir Brill. She won't tell her Husband then,——a charming Creature, and Blessings on her for so convenient a Hint,——she yields, by all that's wicked!——What shall I say to overwhelm her Senses in a Flood of Nonsense? (*aside.*)

Go my Heart's Envoys, tender Sighs make haste,——

Still drink delicious Poison from thy Eye,——

Raptures and Paradise

Pant on thy Lip, and to thy Heart be press'd.

(Forcing her all this time)

Enter Mr. Lovemore.

Love. Zoons, this is too much.

Sir Brill. What the Devil's the Matter now? (*Kneels down to buckle his Shoes.*) This confounded Buckle is always plaguing me.——My dear Boy, Lovemore,——I rejoice to see thee.

(*They stand looking at each other.*)

Love. And have you the Confidence to look me in the Face?

E

Sir

Sir Brill. I was telling your Lady here, of the most whimsical Adventure.——

Love. Don't add the Meanness of Falshood, to the black Attempt of invading your Friend's Happiness.——I did imagine, Sir, from the long Inter-course that has subsisted between us, that you might have had Delicacy enough, Feeling enough, Honour enough, Sir, — not to meditate an Injury like this.

Sir Brill. Ay, ay, 'tis all over, I'm detected. (*aside*) Mr. Lovemore, if begging your Pardon for this Rashness will any ways atone——

Love. No, Sir, nothing can atone. The Provocation you have given me, wou'd justify my drawing upon you this Instant, did not that Lady and this Roof protect you.

Sir Brill. But Mr. Lovemore——

Love. But, Sir——

Sir Brill. I only beg——

Love. Pray, Sir,——Sir, I insist— I won't hear a Word.

Sir Brill. I declare, upon my Honour——

Love. Honour! for Shame, Sir *Brilliant*, don't use the Word.

Sir Brill. If begging Pardon of that Lady——

Love. That Lady!—I desire you will never speak to that Lady.

Sir Brill. Nay, but prithee, *Lovemore*.

Love. No, Sir, no,——I have done with you for the present.—As for you, Madam, I am satisfy'd with your Conduct.—I was indeed, a little alarm'd, but I was a Witness of your Behaviour, and I'm above harbouring low Suspicions.

Sir Brill. Allow me but a Word——

Love. No more, Sir, I have done.

Sir Brill. Let me but explain——

Love. Zoons!——I'll go into another Room to avoid you. (*Going, sees Mrs. Bellmour.*) Hell and Destruction, what Fiend is conjur'd up here?——Zounds, let me make my Escape out of the House.

(*Runs to the other Door.*

Mrs.

Mrs. Love. I'll secure this Door,——you must not go, my Dear. *(Stops him.)*

Love. 'Sdeath, Madam, let me pass.

Mrs. Love. Nay, you shall stay, I want to introduce an Acquaintance of mine to you.

Love. I desire, Madam ——

Enter Mrs. Bellmour.

Mrs. Bell. My Lord, my Lord *Etheridge* ; I am heartily glad to see your Lordship. *(Taking hold of him.)*

Mrs. Love. Do my Dear, let me introduce this Lady to you. *(turning him to her.)*

Love. Here's the Devil and all to do ! *(aside.)*

Mrs. Bell. My Lord, this is the most fortunate Encounter ——

Love. I wish I was Fifty Miles off. *(aside.)*

Mrs. Love. Mrs. Bellmour, give me leave to introduce Mr. Lovemore to you. *(turning him to her.)*

Mrs. Bell. No, my dear Ma'am, let me introduce Lord *Etheridge* to you. *(pulling him.)* My Lord——

Sir Brill. In the Name of Wonder, what is all this ?

Mrs. Love. My dear Ma'am, you're mistaken ; this is my Husband.

Mrs. Bell. Pardon me, Ma'am, 'tis my Lord *Etheridge*.

Mrs. Love. My Dear, how can you be so ill-bred in your own House ? ——Mrs. Bellmour,——this is Mr. Lovemore.

Love. Are you going to toss me in a Blanket Madam ! ——call up the rest of your People, if you are.

Mrs. Bell. Pshaw ! —— Prithee now, my Lord, leave off your Humours ; Mrs. Lovemore, this is my Lord *Etheridge*, a Lover of mine, who has made Proposals of Marriage to me.

Love. Confusion ! let me get rid of these two Furies. *(breaks away from them.)*

Mrs. Bell. *(follows him.)*——My Lord, I say ! my Lord *Etheridge* ! ——won't your Lordship know me ?

Love. This is the most damnable Accident ! (*aside*)

Mrs. Bell. I hope your Lordship has not forgot your Appointment at my House this Evening.

Love. Ay now my Turn is come. (*aside.*)

Mrs. Bell. Prithee, my Lord, what have I done, that you treat me with this Coldness ? Come, come, you shall have a Wife, I will take Compassion on you.

Love. Damnation ! I can't stand this. (*aside.*)

Mrs. Bell. Come, cheer up, my Lord ; — What the duce, your Dress is alter'd ! — What's become of the Star and the Ribband ? — And so the gay, the florid, the *magnifique* Lord *Etheridge*, dwindles down into plain Mr. *Love*more, the Married Man ! Mr. *Love*more, your most obedient, very humble Servant, Sir.

Love. I can't bear to feel myself in so ridiculous a Circumstance. (*aside.*)

Mrs. Bell. I beg my Compliments to your Friend Mrs. *Love*it ; and I am much oblig'd to you both for your very honourable Designs. — (*curtysing to him.*)

Love. I never was so ashamed in all my Life ! —

Sir Brill. So, so, so, all his Pains were to hide the Star from me. — The Discovery is a perfect Cordial to my dejected Spirits.

Mrs. Bell. Mrs. *Love*more, I cannot sufficiently acknowledge the Providence, that directed you to pay me a Visit, tho' I was wholly unknown to you ; and I shall henceforth consider you as my Deliverer.

Love. Zoons ! It was she that fainted away in the Closet, and be damn'd to her Jealousy. (*aside.*)

Sir Brill. By all that's whimsical, an odd sort of an Adventure this — my Lord, (*advances to him.*) My Lord, — my Lord *Etheridge*, as the Man says in the Play, " Your Lordship's right welcome back to Denmark."

Love. Now he comes upon me. — Oh ! I'm in a fine Situation. (*aside.*)

Sir Brill. My Lord, I hope that ugly Pain in your Lordship's Side, is abated.

Love. Absurd, and ridiculous. (*aside.*)

Sir Brill. There is nothing forming there, I hope, my Lord. Mrs.

Mrs. Love. (*apart with Mrs. Bellmour.*) I begin now to feel for him, and to pity his Uneasiness.

Sir Brill. Pray, my Lord, don't you think it a base Thing to invade the Happiness of a Friend? Or to do him a clandestine Wrong? or to injure him with the Woman he loves?

Love. To cut the Matter short with you, Sir, we are both Rascals.

Sir Brill. Rascal!

Love. Ay both! We are two very pretty Fellows indeed!

Mrs. Bell. I am glad to find that you are at length awaken'd into a Sense of your Error. (*to Lovemore.*)

Love. I am, Madam, and I am frank enough to own it.—I am above attempting to disguise my Feelings, when I am conscious they are on the Side of Truth and Honour;—and Madam, with a true Remorse,—I ask your Pardon.

Mrs. Bell. Upon certain Terms, I don't know 'but I may sign and seal your Pardon.

Love. Terms! What Terms?—

Mrs. Bell. That you make due Expiation of your Guilt to that Lady.

Love. That Lady, Ma'am!—That Lady has no Reason to complain.

Mrs. Love. No Reason to complain, Mr. Lovemore?

Love. No Madam,—none! for whatever may have been my Imprudences, they have had their Source in your Conduct.

Mrs. Love. In my Conduct, Sir!

Love. In your Conduct!—I here declare before this Company,—and I am above palliating the Matter, I here declare, that no Man in *England* cou'd be better inclin'd to domestic Happiness, if you, Madam, on your Part, had been willing to make Home agreeable.

Mrs. Love. There I confess he touches me. (*a side.*)

Love. You cou'd take Pains enough before Marriage, —you would put forth all your Charms,—practise all your Arts,—and make your Features please by Rule; for ever changing, running an eternal Round of Variety:—

riety:—And all this to win my Affections:—But when you had won them, you did not think them worth your keeping.—Never drefs'd,—pensive.—silent,—melancholy;—and the only Entertainment in my House, was the dear Pleasure of a dull conjugal *Tete-a-Tete*; and all this Insipidity, because you think the sole Merit of a Wife consists in her Virtue:—A fine Way of amusing a Husband truly!

Sir Brill. Upon my Soul, and so it is.—(laughing.)

Enter Muslin.

Muslin. O Gemini! Gemini! here's such a Piece of Work,—what shall I do?—my poor dear Lady! (Crying bitterly.)

Love. Is the Woman crazy?

Muslin. Oh! Madam,—forgive me, my dear Madam,—I did not do it on purpose,—as I hope for Mercy, I did not.

Mrs. Love. What did not you do?

Muslin. I did not intend to give it him, I would have seen him gibbeted first.—I found the Letter in the Parlour, Madam,—I knew it was the same Letter I had deliver'd to you, and my Curiosity did make me peep into it.—Says my Curiosity,—“Now, *Muslin*, you may gratify yourself, by finding out the Contents of that Letter, which you have such a violent Itching for.”—My Curiosity said so, Ma'am, and then, I own, Ma'am, my Respect for you did say to me, “Hussey, how dare you meddle with what does not belong to you?—Keep your Distance, and let your Mistress's Secrets alone.”—But then upon that, in comes my Curiosity again, and says my Curiosity, “Read it, I tell you, *Muslin*, a Woman of Spirit shou'd know every thing.”—“Let it alone, you Jade,” says my Respect.—“It's as much as your Place is worth”—“There's more Places than one,” says my Curiosity, “and so read it, I tell you, *Muslin*.”—I did read it,—what could I do? Heaven help me,—I did read it,—I don't go to deny it,—I don't, I don't. (Crying.)
Love.

Love. Don't keep such an Uproar, Woman.

Muslin. And then, after I read it, thinks me, I, I'll give this to my Mistress directly, and that perfidious Thing her Husband shall not see it;—and so as my ill Stars would have it, as I was looking for you, I run my Hand full in the Lion's Mouth:

(Crying.)

Sir Brill. What an unlucky Jade it has been!

(aside.)

Mrs. Love. Well, have done, *Muslin*; this is too much.

Mrs. Bell. Upon my Word but she gives him his own.—I suppose you own the Truth of what she says, *Mr. Lovemore*.

Love. Pray, Madam, does that Lady own the Truth of what I have said?

Mrs. Love. Sir, I am sensible there is too much Truth in what you say; this Lady has open'd my Eyes, and convinc'd me, that there was a Mistake in my former Conduct.

Love. Come, come, you need not say any more—I forgive you,—I forgive you.

Mrs. Love. Forgive me! I like that Air of Confidence, when you know, that on my Side, it is at worst, an Error in Judgment, whereas on yours—

Mrs. Bell. Come, come, you know each other's Faults and Virtues, and so you have nothing to do but to mend the former, and enjoy the latter.—There,—there, kiss and Friends.—There, *Mrs. Lovemore*, take your reclaim'd Libertine to your Arms.

Love. It is in your Power, Madam, to make a reclaim'd Libertine of me indeed.

Mrs. Love. From this Moment it shall be our mutual Study to please each other. (They embrace.)

Sir Brill. *Lovemore*, May I presume to hope for Pardon at that Lady's Hands?

Love. My dear Confederate in Vice, your Pardon is granted.—Two sad Dogs we have been,—but come, give us your Hand,—we have us'd each other damnably—for the future we will endeavour to make each other amends.

Sir

Sir Brill. And so we will.——Ma'am, since my Lord decamps from before the Town, may I presume to hope——

Mrs. Bell. I positively forbid you the least Grain of Hope; whenever I take to myself a Husband, I must be convinc'd first, that he will answer the Trouble of keeping him.

Sir Brill. My dear Ma'am, by all that's——

Mrs. Bell. No Swearing——I positively will have my own Way; you shall perform Quarentine before I speak to you again.

Love. She's yours Man, she's yours,—she'll throw herself into your Arms in a Day or two.—And now I heartily congratulate the whole Company, that this Business has had so happy a Tendency to convince each of us of our Folly.

Mrs. Bell. Pray, Sir, don't draw me into Share of your Folly.

Love. Come, come, my dear Ma'am, you are not without your Share of it. This will teach you for the future to be content with one Lover at a time, without listening to a Fellow you know nothing of, —because he assumes a Title, and reports well of himself.

Mrs. Bell. The Reproof is just, I grant it.

Love. Come, let us join the Company chearfully, keep our own Secrets, and not make ourselves a Town-Talk; —— though. I don't know but if this Trans- action were sent abroad into the World, it might prove a very useful Lesson. The Men wou'd see how their Passions may carry them into the Danger of wounding the Bosom of a Friend, —— the Ladies wou'd learn, that after the Marriage-Rites, they shou'd not suffer their Powers of pleasing to languish away, but shou'd still remember to sacrifice to the Graces.

To win a Man, when all your Pains succeed,

The Way to Keep Him, is a Task indeed.

F I N I S



